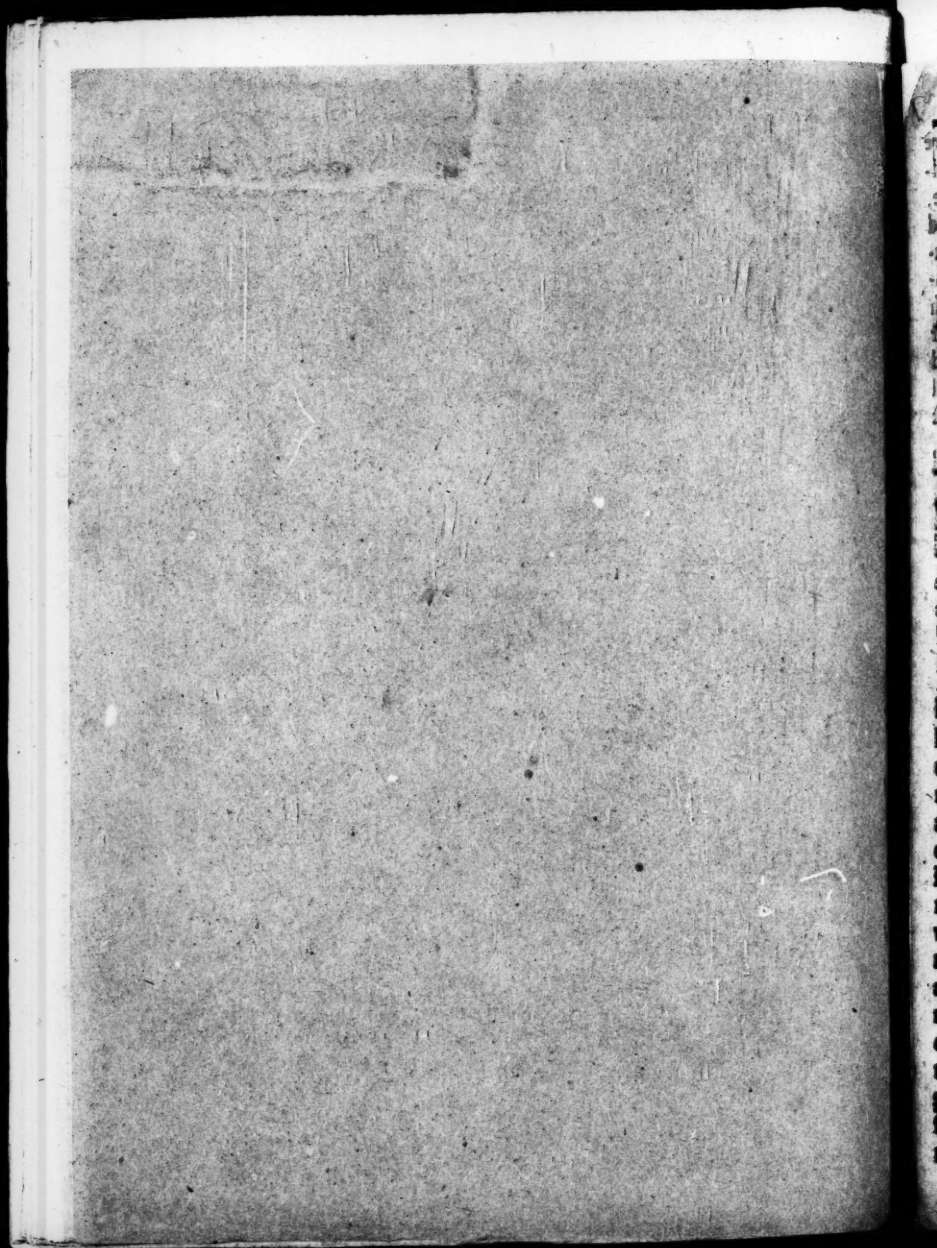


Very Rare

W 74

John Higgins
To all the Inhabitants
of the Earth &
1658

J. Higgins



in my own heart, and by the knowledge of God I thought there to finde: but from thence I came mourning and troubled in spirit, because in that which is called good duties I found no peace, nor satisfaction to the oppressed in me: and here I witnessed truly that sin was to me a burden; so that manie times I went a-part into the fields to pray and mourn in secret, desiring nothing more then the knowledge of the onlie true God which saves from sin, for the want of which was my sorrow: so after a time in this condition, the Lord heard the true desires, and raised a swift witness in me, that the wares of man were evill continually, and that self must be denied, and a cross to it must be borne, and so the life of Christ Jesus was manifest unto me, which being known and received, redemption from sin and salvation from condemnation was witnessed according to the measure of Faith in Christ the Light, by which sin is made manifest: so the knowledge of the pure God was revealed, (even contrary to the imaginations of man in the sensuall wisdom) and he being known and his judgements received, the hard heart is broken and the darkness expelled, and his fear which is a shield against sin is witnessed, whereby the heart is kept pure and clean in his sight, and here to stand a witness for God, against all that talk of his name and fear, but know not the life and strength thereof.

And now hath the Lord opened my mouth, to declare in faithfulness and truth the things which I have seen, and am a witness against, even the great abominations that is committed amongst you inhabitants of *Barland*, the sound of which rings into other Countries, and your lewdness doth exceed many other places, and your sins are more in number then the sins of *Sodom*, or many other places which the Lord hath overthrowen for their wickedness, because they repented not but refused to know the Lord: Therefore hearken and consider, for assuredly the Lord hath a controversie against you, because there is no knowledge of God amongst you, but altogether wandering in vanity and uncleanness, for your young men are wild and wanton, whose minds run after women and strong drink, and the aged men and women are living and delighting themselves in vanity and lewdness, even the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye,

and the pride of life, so that the knowledge of God is even rejected, and oppression, covetousness, and deceitfull dealing is received and exalted amongst you, and much of the Creatures of the Lord is destroyed amongst you, through the lust and excess, and that abominable sin of drunkenness you are highly guilty of, and lyeing, and swearing, and pride, and greedy exaction in your buying and selling is found amongst you, especially in a time of quick trading, and through the abundance of this unrighteous gain and ease in the flesh, you are grown gross and fat, that you are even as the Beasts that is fitted for the slaughter. And this is not the number of thy transgressions, but you are set against the Lord, and being heart-blind you know it not, neither desire the knowledge of his waies, but despitefully use them that are sent amongst you, for severall times hath the Lord brought me amongst you to bear witness against you sin, and idolatrous worship, and once was I hailed out of your Synagogue, and once beaten in your streets, and often stoned and mocked, with my friends and brethren with me, yea all this is done, and few there be that lay it to hearts, and because judgement is not executed upon you speedily, therefore your hearts are bent to do wickedlie, but assuredlie the day of the Lord is at hand, wherein all these things will be brought to your remembrance, and your own hearts and consciences shall condemne you in that day, when he brings his judgement near unto you, for he hath long borne your sinns, and given you rest and fruitfull seasons, and his goodness hath not been restrained from you, but in all this you have not known him, but his grace and mercy herein hath been turned into wantonness, and to the lust and libertie of the flesh.

Woe, Woe, to all drunkards, for the day will come, wherein the Wine and the strong drink shall be restrained, then shall they weep and howle for thirst and not be satisfied, and woe unto all you whose delight and life is in any creature, for the Lord hath determined to make the earth empty and desolate, and all the glorie of man to deface; for verilie I have heard from the Lord a voice of terrible judgement, which will make all the Inhabitants of the earth to fear and tremble. for the Lord in his judgement will be known, because in his

mercies man knows him not; therefore repent, repent whilst his mercie is, before the day of desolation, and miserie come.

Then woe unto you who have been the teachers of this people, who for filthy lucre have deceived their souls, teaching for doctrine the traditions of men, daubing the people with fair words, because they put into your mouths, but he that doth not you even prepare war against him, and peace you say to the rich, and judgement to the poor in spirit, and so the word is not divided a right, but truth is turned backward for the waies of unrighteousness, and you through your learning and arts, have been idolized manie dayes, but now your flatterie is seen, and your learning is come to naught, and your unrighteousness will be made manifest to the eyes of al people that have been deceived therewith, and all your righteousness and unrighteousness is fin in the sight of God, and your reward shall be accordinglie.

Therefore all, both priest and people, consider of your waies, and amend your lives, for verily the Lord will not be mocked although for a time he may be silent, for all your assemblies and pretended worship is abominable in the sight of God, whilst you continue in the abominations of the heathen, and all your performances is but the traditions of men, performed in a customary way, in ignorance of the knowledge of the living God, whom you say you serve, but the wild scarpfull nature knoweth not the Lord of glory, and how can you serve him whom you know not, yet are you nourishing your hearts in that which the blind guides teaches you to observe, thinking thereby to find acceptance with the Lord, but it is all polluted.

And novv as concerning that vvhich you call the ordmanees of God, and the order in your Church, novv see from vvhom you have your example, for it is altogether contrarie to the practise of the Servants of the Lord in all generations the Scripture of truth bearing testimonie to vvhath I say, and thereby let your doctrines be tried: and first, vvhath command or example do you think you have for sprinkling little children, calling that baptism, or an entrance into the christian Church &c. And if you vvhould go to the vvritings of the Apostles for proof for this practise, it is not there to be found, neither vv as it ever
their

their practise, but it is that which by the *Pope* and the *Popish* affected Priests was ordained, and by such it is upheld to this day, through the ignorance that is yet remaining in the earth; but this is known and confessed, that water baptism was once the administration of *John*, who bare witness to the true Christ, and said, *that is the true Christ which enlighteneth every man that cometh into the world*, who by his death and resurrection put an end to all that stood in the outward Covenant, he being the substance of all types and shadows, who said henceforth is the Father worshiped in spirit and in truth; but you are so far from the power and life of that administration, that you are not in the true form and manner of it, though you falsely say the Scripture is your rule, and the Apostles practise your example, but sprinkling of children was never the practise of the Apostles, but the inventions of the erroneous spirit.

And as concerning your practise singing in of *David's* Psalms, prayers and Prophecies in rime and meeter, saying let us sing to the praise and glory of God such a Psalme; then doth all the multitude sing after the Priest, when peradventure there is many drunkards, and swearers, and adulterers, and fighters, and proud persons, singing all with a voice they are not puffed in mind, but as harmless as a weaned child, and such like words is uttered in the blasphemous spirit without an understanding, in the Antichristian ignorance; so that this is abomination to the Lord, and not to his praise; but *David* being as a weaned child, even harmless and innocent, he could sing to the praise of the Lord, with an understanding according as the spirit gave him utterance, and that is owned by the children of the Lord, and approved of in the light of our Lord *Jesus Christ*.

And now what example is there for Priests to require, or people to give them so much a yeare, even the tenth part (or near) of the increase of the fields, and of the labour of themselves, and the labour of their cattle, for preaching the traditions of men, upon the first day of the week; through which unrighteous gain, they are at ease in the lust and liberty of the flesh, being thereby maintained, with their wives and children, in all superfluity and gorgeous apparel, without labouring in the creation, bearing rule by their means, as it was in the dayes of *Jeremiah*, Chap. 5. and the two last verses, so that this practise

practise is also contrary to the *pastles*, it being that which the Prophets of the Lord alwaies cryed against, as you may read *Isa. the 56: 11. Micah 3. 11.* so that for this example there is the practise of the false Prophets, and not the practise of the true Prophets and Apostles, but by them such was ever cryed out against.

And now I exhort all in the fear of the Lord God, to mind the lights of Christ Jesus in your consciences, making manifest all unrighteousnesses, & condemning y^e in your own hearts for all the evil that you are exercised in, & turn aside from following of blind guides, even such as go in the error of Balaam for gifts and rewards, and in the steps of the false Prophets of Israel, who studied and divined for money, seeking their gain from their quarter, &c. And although they may tel you there is salvation in Christ that dyed at Jerusalem, with many other fair words, spoken from an avery spirit, but this I say that their words and your beliefs so long as sin reigns, will be little worth in the day of judgement, for he that is not led by the same spirit as he was, is none of his, and all drunkards and swearers, and proud and lustful ones are excluded, and for ever condemned by him, and the manifestation of his spirit in the heart and conscience will accuse eternally; therefore silence all vaine talkers, and hirelings, and deceivers, who feed your selves and not the flock, against whom the Lord hath a great controversy, and he will plead with you in judgement.

Then shall all the earth know that the Lord sends not his message by the learned, wise and prudent men of this generation, who would exclude all others from the ministry; and these be they that follow the error of Balaam, who erred in going after gifts and rewards; and this is the error of the Priests and false Prophets in these days, who for love of the reward speaks peace, where the judgement of the Lord is to rest; so that this is not the Gospel of Christ which they declare, for that is the same now as ever it was, not of man, nor by the will of man, but by the will of God; even so are the ministers thereof called and chosen according to his will, and not the will of man, and we do know that the Lord hath chosen the weak and despised of this world to confound the strong and mighty in their own wisdom; and herein is the power of the Lord manifested, praises be to his name for ever: And in all their learning they are corrupted, and the knowledge of the languages, of Hebrew, Greek and

Latine, (which they call the originall) is nothing worth as pertaining to the knowledge of God; but the Spirit of the Lord Jesus Christ is now made manifest, which is the originall of all truth and righteousness, and by it the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven is revealed, and all unrighteous practices of men are by it discovered, and it searcheth and knoweth all things, and without it none knowes the Lord as he is.

Therefore all people come down to the manifestation of that spirit in your own hearts and consciences, which will give you the knowledge of sin, and every evil way, and it will discover the very thoughts and intents of the heart; yea all the evil lustful desires in the heart of man, are by it made manifest and condemned; and as faithful obedience unto it is yielded, and that decayed which by it is manifest to be evil, sin comes to be destroyed, and the knowledge of God comes to be revealed in and by Christ Jesus, who hath enlightened every man that cometh into the world, giving unto all men a manifestation of his spirit, that in the day of judgement all might be left without excuse; so that all they that believe in the light and follow it, shall not abide in darkness nor come under condemnation, but all that turn from that light of Christ in the conscience abides in darkness, and in sin, and under condemnation, whatever their profession is, and none shall ever be justified before God, who are condemned in their own hearts and consciences by the light of Christ Jesus; who is one with the Father, and answers to him in judgement, and in mercy as he is followed; and whosoever will follow the light of Christ in the conscience, must deny themselves, and bear a cross to their own wills, and all mens will in whatsoever is thereby made manifest to be contrary to God; for man being in the transgression, this hath the Lord appointed and ordained to guide and direct man out of sin and transgression, if ever he be restored into the Image of God again; so that man in denying the light of Christ, remains in sin, and by the light is eternally condemned in sin, being under the chaine of darkness, with the damned spirits that rules the children of disobedience; he that reads let him understand.

Now in the fear of the Lord, I warn you all that keep Beer, or Ale, or VVine to, sell that you let no man have drink till he be drunk (as hitherto you have done) for in so doing the Lord will not hold you guiltlesse, and all your gain and profit thereby is even curst of the Lord; and beside this I know, and you are also sensible of it, that when the creature is overcome with drink, then he is fit and ready with a little temptation to act uncleannesse with women, and to swear and lye, and quarrel, and fight to the abuse of himselfe, and the bodies of others, and more such like evil practices is thereby committed amongst you; therefore fear, fear the dreadful God, who takes an account of all these abominations.

And all you that are called *Ranters*, assuredly the Lord will enter into judgement with you, for all your whoredom, pride, and drunkennesse, and all uncleannesse, though in the presumption of your spirits, you say you know no evil that you do in these or the like practices, yet the living God will make

make you know by his judgements that you are the most filthyest that lives amongst men, and the manifestation of Gods spirit in your own consciences will for ever condemn you, and will be unto you as an everlasting burning, except you repent.

And all you young men, amongst whom I had my conversation in the dayes past, consider for what end the Lord created you, and how you live in wantonnesse, and in pleasure, and lust, and drunkennesse, and all the fruits of the flesh, for which you were not created, but he that created you and gave you life, it was to serve him, the Lord of glory, and not your own lusts and pleasures; and all know assuredly that you are under the power of the Lord, who will cast forth his fury as a flood, which will make all ungodly ones to languish and be afraid, when he thunders forth his judgement upon all the world of ungodly.

And herein have I cleared my conscience toward you
in plainnesse & truth; making known unto you, that
which the Lord by his spirit hath made known
unto me concerning you.

Written at Dover in Kent, in the first

Month of the year of the worlds

account, 1658.

L. H.

THE END.

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